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Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Knut **Langeland** (Norway)

I. Introduction

1. The item entitled "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security" was included in the provisional agenda of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly in accordance with Assembly resolution 66/24 of 2 December 2011.

2. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 21 September 2012, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.

3. At its 1st meeting, on 5 October 2012, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, namely, items 86 to 102. From 8 to 12 and on 15 and 16 October, the Committee held a general debate on those items and had an exchange of views with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and other high-level officials, including on follow-up to resolutions and decisions adopted at previous sessions (see A/C.1/67/PV.2-8). The Committee also held 10 meetings, from 17 to 19 and from 22 to 25 October, and on 1 and 2 November, for a thematic debate and panel discussions with independent experts (see A/C.1/67/PV.9-18). At the 9th to 18th meetings, from 17 to 19 and from 22 to 25 October, and on 1 and 2 November, draft resolutions were introduced and considered (see A/C.1/67/PV.9-18). The Committee took action on all draft resolutions and decisions at the 18th to 22nd meetings, on 2 and from 5 to 7 November (see A/C.1/67/PV.18-22).

4. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the report of the Secretary-General on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security (A/67/167).

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II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.30

5. At the 17th meeting, on 1 November, the representative of the Russian Federation, on behalf of Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Belarus, Brazil, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mali, Myanmar, Nicaragua, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Sierra Leone, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security" (A/C.1/67/L.30). Subsequently, Madagascar and the Sudan joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

6. At its 21st meeting, on 6 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.30 without a vote (see para. 7).

III. Recommendation of the First Committee

7. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 53/70 of 4 December 1998, 54/49 of 1 December 1999, 55/28 of 20 November 2000, 56/19 of 29 November 2001, 57/53 of 22 November 2002, 58/32 of 8 December 2003, 59/61 of 3 December 2004, 60/45 of 8 December 2005, 61/54 of 6 December 2006, 62/17 of 5 December 2007, 63/37 of 2 December 2008, 64/25 of 2 December 2009, 65/41 of 8 December 2010 and 66/24 of 2 December 2011,

Recalling also its resolutions on the role of science and technology in the context of international security, in which, inter alia, it recognized that scientific and technological developments could have both civilian and military applications and that progress in science and technology for civilian applications needed to be maintained and encouraged,

Noting that considerable progress has been made in developing and applying the latest information technologies and means of telecommunication,

Affirming that it sees in this process the broadest positive opportunities for the further development of civilization, the expansion of opportunities for cooperation for the common good of all States, the enhancement of the creative potential of humankind and additional improvements in the circulation of information in the global community,

Recalling, in this connection, the approaches and principles outlined at the Information Society and Development Conference, held in Midrand, South Africa, from 13 to 15 May 1996,

Bearing in mind the results of the Ministerial Conference on Terrorism, held in Paris on 30 July 1996, and the recommendations that were made,[1]

Bearing in mind also the results of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003 (first phase) and in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005 (second phase),[2]

Noting that the dissemination and use of information technologies and means affect the interests of the entire international community and that optimum effectiveness is enhanced by broad international cooperation,

Expressing concern that these technologies and means can potentially be used for purposes that are inconsistent with the objectives of maintaining international stability and security and may adversely affect the integrity of the infrastructure of States to the detriment of their security in both civil and military fields,

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[1] See A/51/261, annex.

[2] A/C.2/59/3, annex, and A/60/687.

Considering that it is necessary to prevent the use of information resources or technologies for criminal or terrorist purposes,

Noting the contribution of those Member States that have submitted their assessments on issues of information security to the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraphs 1 to 3 of resolutions 53/70, 54/49, 55/28, 56/19, 57/53, 58/32, 59/61, 60/45, 61/54, 62/17, 63/37, 64/25, 65/41 and 66/24,

Taking note of the reports of the Secretary-General containing those assessments,[3]

Welcoming the initiative taken by the Secretariat and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research in convening international meetings of experts in Geneva in August 1999 and April 2008 on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, as well as the results of those meetings,

Considering that the assessments of Member States contained in the reports of the Secretary-General and the international meetings of experts have contributed to a better understanding of the substance of issues of international information security and related notions,

Bearing in mind that the Secretary-General, in fulfilment of resolution 60/45, established in 2009, on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, a group of governmental experts, which, in accordance with its mandate, considered existing and potential threats in the sphere of information security and possible cooperative measures to address them and conducted a study on relevant international concepts aimed at strengthening the security of global information and telecommunications systems,

Welcoming the effective work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security and the relevant report transmitted by the Secretary-General,[4]

Taking note of the assessments and recommendations contained in the report of the Group of Governmental Experts,

1. *Calls upon* Member States to promote further at multilateral levels the consideration of existing and potential threats in the field of information security, as well as possible strategies to address the threats emerging in this field, consistent with the need to preserve the free flow of information;

2. *Considers* that the purpose of such strategies could be served through further examination of relevant international concepts aimed at strengthening the security of global information and telecommunications systems;

3. *Invites* all Member States, taking into account the assessments and recommendations contained in the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security,[4] to continue to inform the Secretary-General of their views and assessments on the following questions:

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[3] A/54/213, A/55/140 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/56/164 and Add.1, A/57/166 and Add.1, A/58/373, A/59/116 and Add.1, A/60/95 and Add.1, A/61/161 and Add.1, A/62/98 and Add.1, A/64/129 and Add.1, A/65/154, A/66/152 and Add.1 and A/67/167.

[4] See A/65/201.

(a) General appreciation of the issues of information security;

(b) Efforts taken at the national level to strengthen information security and promote international cooperation in this field;

(c) The content of the concepts mentioned in paragraph 2 above;

(d) Possible measures that could be taken by the international community to strengthen information security at the global level;

4. *Welcomes* the commencement of the work of the Group of Governmental Experts, authorizes the Group, taking into account the assessments and recommendations contained in the above-mentioned report, to continue to study existing and potential threats in the sphere of information security and possible cooperative measures to address them, including norms, rules or principles of responsible behaviour of States and confidence-building measures with regard to information space, as well as the concepts referred to in paragraph 2 above, and requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session a report on the results of the study;

5. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-eighth session the item entitled "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security".